Siraya language

Siraya is a Formosan language spoken until the end of the 19th century by the indigenous Siraya people of Taiwan, derived from Proto-Siraya. Some scholars believe Taivoan and Makatao are two dialects of Siraya, but now more evidence shows that they should be classified as separate languages.

Several Siraya communities have been involved in a Sirayan cultural and language revitalization movement for more than a decade. Through linguistic research and language teaching, the natives are 'awaking' their ancestors mother tongue that has been 'dormant' for a century. Today a group of Siraya children in Sinhua District of Tainan particularly in Kou-pei and Chiou Chen Lin area are able to speak and sing in the Siraya language.[3]

Contents

Siraya	
Native to	Taiwan
Region	Southwestern, around present-day Tainan
Extinct	end of 19th century; revitalization movement

Language family	Austronesian
	• East Formosan
	  • Sirayaic
	    • **Siraya**

Dialects	Taivoan (arguably) Makatao (arguably)
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	`fos`
Glottolog	`sira1267 (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/sira1267)` Sirayaic[1] `nucl1578 (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/nucl1578)` Siraya[2]
Linguasphere	`30-FAA-b`

(pink) Siraya

Coordinates: 22°58′N 120°18′E

Dialects

The Sirayaic languages were previously thought to include three languages or dialects:

- Siraya proper — spoken in the coastal area of Tainan Plain.
- Taivoan — spoken mostly in the inland of Tainan Plain to the north (just west of Southern Tsouic territories).
- Makatao — spoken in Kaohsiung and Pingtung Prefectures to the south (just west of Paiwan territories).

However, more and more evidences have shown that Siraya, Taivoan, and Makatao are three different languages, rather than three dialects:

Documentary evidence

In "De Dagregisters van het Kasteel Zeelandia" written by the Dutch colonizers during 1629–1662, it was clearly said that when the Dutch people would like to speak to the chieftain of Cannacannavo (Kanakanavu), they needed to translate from Dutch to Sinckan (Siraya), from Sinckan to Tarroequan (possibly a Paiwan or a Rukai language), from Tarroequan to Taivoan, and from Taivoan to Cannacannavo.[4][5]

> "...... in Cannacannavo: Aloelavaos tot welcken de vertolckinge in Sinccans, Tarrocquans en Tevorangs geschiede, weder voor een jaer aengenomen" — "De Dagregisters van het Kasteel Zeelandia", pp.6-8

Linguistic evidence

A comparison of numerals of Siraya, Taivoan (Tevorangh dialect), and Makatao (Kanapo dialect) with Proto-Austronesian language show the difference among the three Austronesian languages in southwestern Taiwan in the early 20th century:[6][7]

	PAn	Siraya (UM) [note 1]	Siraya (Gospel) [note 2]	Siraya (Kongana) [note 3]	Taivoan (Tevorangh) [note 4]	Makatao (Kanapo) [note 5]
1	*asa	sa-sat	saat	sasaat	tsaha	na-saad
2	*duSa	sa-soa	ruha	duha	ruha	ra-ruha
3	*telu	tu-turo	turu	turu	tuhu	ra-ruma
4	*Sepat	pa-xpat	xpat	tapat	paha'	ra-sipat
5	*lima	ri-rima	rima	tu-rima	hima	ra-lima
6	*enem	ni-nam	nom	tu-num	lom	ra-hurum
7	*pitu	pi-pito	pitu	pitu	kito	ra-pito
8	*walu	kuxipat	kuixpa	pipa	kipa	ra-haru
9	*Siwa	matuda	matuda	kuda	matuha	ra-siwa
10	*puluq	keteang	kitian	keteng	kaipien	ra-kaitian

In 2009, Li (2009) further proved the relationship among the three languages, based on the latest linguistic observations below:[8]

Major differences among the Sirayaic languages

	Siraya	Taivoan	Makatao	PA
Sound change (1)	r	Ø~h	r	< *l
Sound change (2)	l	l	n	< *N
Sound change (3)	s	r, d	r, d	< *D, *d
Sound change (4)	-k- -g-	Ø Ø	-k- ----	< *k < *S
Morphological change (suffices for future tense)	-ali	-ah	-ani	

Based on the discovery, Li attempted two classification trees:[8]

1. *Tree based on the number of phonological innovations*

- **Sirayaic**
  - *Taivoan*
  - Siraya–Makatao
    - *Siraya*
    - *Makatao*

2. *Tree based on the relative chronology of sound changes*

- **Sirayaic**
  - *Siraya*
  - Taivoan–Makatao
    - *Taivoan*
    - *Makatau*

Li (2009) considers the second tree (the one containing the Taivoan–Makatao group) to be the somewhat more likely one.[8]

Lee (2015) regards that, when Siraya was a lingua franca among at least eight indigenous communities in southwestern Taiwan plain, Taivoan people from Tevorangh, who has been proved to have their own language in "De Dagregisters van het Kasteel Zeelandia", might still need the translation service from Wanli, a neighbor community that shared common hunting field and also a militarily alliance with Tevorangh.[5]

Sources

The Siraya language entered the historical record in the early 17th century when traders from the Dutch East India Company, expelled from mainland China and Chinese waters, set up a stronghold on Taiwan at Fort Zeelandia, which was in the Siraya-speaking area. During the period of Dutch rule in Taiwan, Calvinist missionaries used Siraya and Babuza (also known as *Favorlang*) as contact languages. A translation of the Gospel of St. Matthew into Siraya (174 pages of Siraya and Dutch text, Gravius 1661)[10][11] and a catechism in Siraya (288 pages of Siraya and Dutch text, Gravius 1662)[12] were published, and have been subsequently republished.[13] The Dutch colony was driven out in 1661 by Ming loyalist refugees from China, and Taiwan

Gospel of St. Matthew in Dutch, Sinckan, and English.[9] Original Dutch and Sinckan above is from 1661 by Daniel Gravius; English in small type was added in 1888 by Scottish missionary William Campbell.

was subsequently incorporated into the Qing Empire. During the period of Qing Dynasty rule, use of Siraya receded, but some Siraya language materials survive in the form of Siraya land contracts with Chinese translations, known as the Sinckan Manuscripts. The last records were lists of words made in the early 19th century.

The Tainan Ping-pu Siraya Association is compiling the first modern-day Siraya glossary. Publication is scheduled for November 2008.

Phonology

The phonological system of Siraya is speculated by Adelaar (1997) to have the following phonemes.

Consonants (18-20 total)

b d n͞g [14]
p t k
m n ng
l, r
v z
c
[f] s x h
w y

Vowels (7 total)

- a, ä, i (ĭ), e, ə, u (ŭ), o

Diphthongs (6 total)

- ay, ey, uy, äw, aw, ow

Palatalization also occurs in many words.

Grammar

Siraya auxiliaries constitute an open class and are placed at the head of the verb phrase (Adelaar 1997).

Pronouns

The Siraya personal pronouns below are from Adelaar (1997).

Siraya Personal Pronouns

Type of Pronoun	Free	Actor or Possessive	Topic	Oblique
1s.	ĭau	-(m)au	-koh	ĭau-an
2s.	ĭmhu	-(m)uhu, -(m)oho	-kow	ĭmhu-an
3s.	teni	tĭn	teni	tĭni-än (tĭni-an)
1p. (incl.)	ĭmĭtta	-(m)ĭtta, -(m)eta	-kĭtta	ĭmittä-n
1p. (excl.)	ĭmi-an	-(m)ian, -(m)iän	-kame	mian-än (mian-an)
2p.	ĭmumi	-(m)umi	(-)kamu	ĭmumi-än (ĭmumi-an)
3p.	ta neini	nein	neini	neini-än (neini-an)

Function words

The list of function words below is sourced from Adelaar (1997).

Demonstratives

- atta, k(a)-atta 'this, these'
- anna, k(a)-anna 'that, those'

Interrogatives

- mang 'what?'
- ti mang 'who?'
- tu mang 'where'
- mama mang, mama ki mang, mameymang 'how?'

- kaumang 'why?'

Negation markers

- assi (also "aoussi") 'no(t)'
- ĭnna' don't'
- nĭnno 'nothing'
- mi-kakua.. . assi ("myhkaqua ... assi") 'never'
- ĭnnang ("ynnang") 'refuse to, not want to; don't'

Other words

- *ti* - personal article
- *ta* - topic marker
- *tu* - locative marker
- *ki* - default relation marker
- *tu ämäx ki* - "before"
- *tu lam ki* - "together with"
- *ka* - coordinating conjunction (links verbal clauses)

Verbs

The following list of Siraya verb affixes is from Adelaar (1997).

Affixes

- ni-: past tense
- ma-, m-, -m-: actor focus / orientation
- pa-: undergoer focus / orientation
- mey- ~ pey-: actor- and undergoer-oriented verbs (used with verbs describing a high degree of physical involvement)
- mu- ~ (p)u-: actor- and undergoer-oriented verbs (used with verbs describing a movement toward something)
- ma-: stative intransitive verbs; words with no apparent word-class affiliations (precategorials)
- paka-: causative
- pa-: transitive (often with causative result)
- ka-: expresses feeling, emotion, sensation (undergoer-oriented verbs and deverbal nouns only)
- -ən, -an: undergoer focus / orientation
- -a, -ey, -aw: irrealis
- -(l)ato: possibly a perfective marker

See also *Proto-Austronesian language* for a list of Proto-Austronesian verbal affixes.

Classifiers

Like Bunun and many other Formosan languages, Siraya has a rich set of verbal classifier prefixes.

- mattäy- / pattäy-: "talking, saying"
- smaki-: "throwing,casting"
- sau-: "swearing, making an oath"
- mu-, pu-: movement into a certain direction
- mey- / pey-: high degree of physical involvement
- sa-: movement through a narrow place
- taw-: downward movement, a movement within a confined space

Numerals

Siraya has a base ten numeral system with the following forms:[13]

Siraya Numerals

	Cardinal	Ordinal
1	saat, sa-saat	nawnamu
2	ruha, ru-ruha	ka-ra-ruha
3	turu, tu-turu	ka-ta-turu
4	xpat, pa-xpat	ka-axpat
5	rima, ri-rima	ka-ri-rima
6	nom, nə-nəm	ka-annəm
7	pĭttu, pĭ-pĭttu	ka-pa-pĭttu
8	kuixpa	ka-kuixpa
9	matuda	ka-matuda, ka-ma-matuda
10	saat kĭttiän	ka-sasaat kĭttiän
	Examples of higher numerals	
12	saat kĭttiän äb ki ruha	
14	saat kĭttiän äb ki pat	
30	turu kĭttiän	
60	nənnəm kĭttiän	
99	matuda kĭttiän äb ki matuda	
100	saat ka-ätux-an	
4,000	xpat ka-tunnun-an	
5,000	lima ka-tunnun-an	

Examples

The Lord's Prayer

Raman-jan ka ito-tounnoun kow ki vullu-vullum;
Pakou-titik-auh ta nanang-oho,
Pa-irou-au ta pei-sasou-an- oho,
Paamt-au ta kamoei-en-hou, mama tou tounnoun ki vullum, k'ma-hynna tou Naei
Ph'ei -kame wae'i k'atta ki paoul-ian ka mamsing.
Atta-ral-a ki kaeu-itting-en-hou ymiaen-an, mama ka attaral-kame ta ymiaen ki kaeu-itting-'niaen
Ka inei-kame dmyllough tou repung-an, ra haoumi-ei-kame ki littou.
Ka a'mouhou ta pei-sasou-an, ta pei-lpoug-han, ta keirang-en ki kidi tou yhkaquan myd-darynnough,
Amen

See also

- Daniel Gravius - Siraya language scholar
- Sinckan Manuscripts
- Taivoan language

Notes

1. Based on the Siraya vocabulary found in the Utrecht Manuscript written in the 17th century.
2. Based on the Siraya vocabulary found in the Gospel of St. Matthew written in the 17th century.
3. Attested in Siraya's Kongana community in the early 20th century.
4. Attested among Tevorangh-Taivoan communities, including Siaolin, Alikuan, and Kahsianpoo, in the early 20th century.
5. Attested in Makatao's Kanapo community in the early 20th century.

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9. Campbell & Gravius (1888), p. 1.

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14. The exact phonemic value of "nḡ," as it appears in Siraya language documents, is unknown.